

June 2017



GEORGIA VOCATIONAL
REHABILITATION AGENCY

Roosevelt
Warm Springs

90

Years



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Celebrating 90 Years

Roosevelt Warm Springs has its 90th birthday this year.

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the campus of Roosevelt Warm Springs (RWS). Founded by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in July of 1927, RWS continues a tradition of compassion and quality care. Originally known as the Georgia Warm Springs Foundation, its aim was to provide a place of rehabilitation and treatment for polio patients.

Now in its ninth decade, the campus serves as a comprehensive rehabilitation center dedicated to service, technological advancement, program diversity and continuing education on behalf of persons with disabilities. Roosevelt Warm Springs remains a national treasure and Georgia "point-of-pride."

To celebrate, we're counting down the anniversary with 90 unique facts about FDR and RWS on our Facebook and Twitter pages,

and here's a taste.

Pictured on the cover of this newsletter is the birthday cake at RWS that was baked in honor of FDR's birthday in 1934. This was one of 6,000 "Birthday Balls" across the country that raised \$1.3 million for the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. That same year, Roosevelt was elected President of the United States.

These Birthday Ball fundraisers blossomed in 1938 into what is today the March of Dimes. The mission of the March of Dimes is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality. It is still in operation today.

We have a few more memories to share on the next few pages. Remember to follow us on social media and walk through the history of RWS with us!

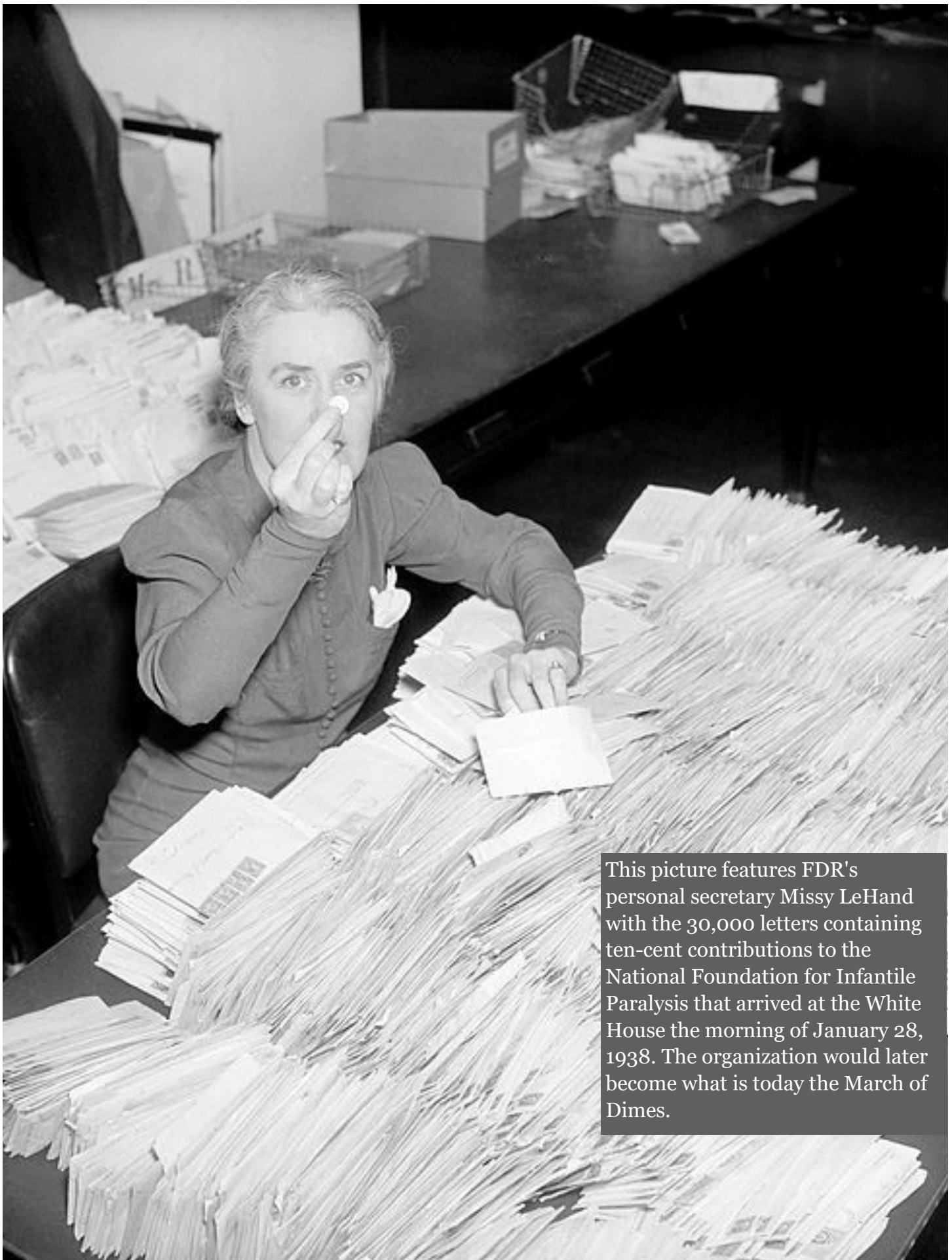




In 1928, FDR was elected of governor of New York. It was celebrated at Roosevelt Warm Springs with a dress parade (pictured top)



In 1932, Roosevelt built the Little White House. That same year he was elected President of the United States. The Little White House (pictured left) still stands today and is open to the public for tours.



This picture features FDR's personal secretary Missy LeHand with the 30,000 letters containing ten-cent contributions to the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis that arrived at the White House the morning of January 28, 1938. The organization would later become what is today the March of Dimes.

Start Spreading the News

GVRA has been called the state's best kept secret. No longer.



If you move amongst disability circles around the state, you've heard it before: the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency is the best kept secret in Georgia. While those in the know can talk about the myriad of services GVRA offers to individuals with disabilities, oftentimes, the problem is that those individuals don't know about them. As an agency, we're working across multiple platforms to not only change that but to ensure that once they do hear about us, they can be processed through intake and begin their career journey.

Beginning in the second quarter of 2016, GVRA entered into an advertising contract with the Georgia Association of Broadcasters, an agreement that would maximize the agency's exposure statewide at a relatively minimal cost per ad. This initial round of advertisements were exclusively on the radio, hundreds of spots across more than 150 stations reaching from the coast to the mountains to the Florida border and everywhere in between.

And the advertising blitz will soon reach new and more visual heights. Beginning in July—the first quarter of the state fiscal year—the contract with the Georgia Association of Broadcasters will be expanding to television. In the coming weeks and months, look for these ads in every market in the state.

This will run in conjunction with a piece being produced by Dale Cardwell, a popular consumer investigator in Atlanta who has a syndicated TV show that runs throughout Georgia. The episode that features GVRA will highlight Business Enterprise Program Vendor Dale King (pictured being interviewed above) and GVRA Executive Director Sean T. Casey (pictured on the following page). It will run on 22 stations beginning in August. In addition, a long interview with Sean was featured on News Talk 1160.

In addition, GVRA remains committed to providing the most up to date agency news via our website (www.gvs.ga.gov) and on Facebook and Twitter. On top of that, the

GVRA Office of Communications and Marketing puts out a daily news aggregate called the Daily Update, in this very monthly newsletter and accessible online videos, all in an effort to spread the good news of what the organization is doing and to maintain the highest level of transparency.

But what happens once the word is out there? That's where GVRA's new Outreach and Intake Pilot Program for Metro Atlanta kicks in.

In recent months, the development of the initiative has steadily progressed. With collaborative input from various strategic partners in the mapping process, the ultimate aim of this new program is to more efficiently and expediently assess individuals with disabilities to determine their eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation services.

To achieve this, the group—which is headed by Outreach and Intake Pilot Initiative Manager Rebecca Walden—has been working to revise and eliminate redundancy of the referral, application and eligibility process. By streamlining these things, it decreases stress on the applicant as well as on the counselor processing the case for eligibility.

Specifically, they've been working on the development of training materials for new staff, new forms including an online referral and new intake form, a recorded orientation video that will ensure all clients receive the

same orientation information and streamlining processes and procedures. They have also been working directly with the Service Satisfaction Manager to develop ways of tracking the pilot's success.

They are currently in the process of hiring staff to fill key positions. These include an Outreach Specialist, Referral Specialist, Application Specialist, Eligibility Specialist and Administrative Assistant.

Stay tuned for future outreach and marketing updates.



The Business Enterprise Program Updates

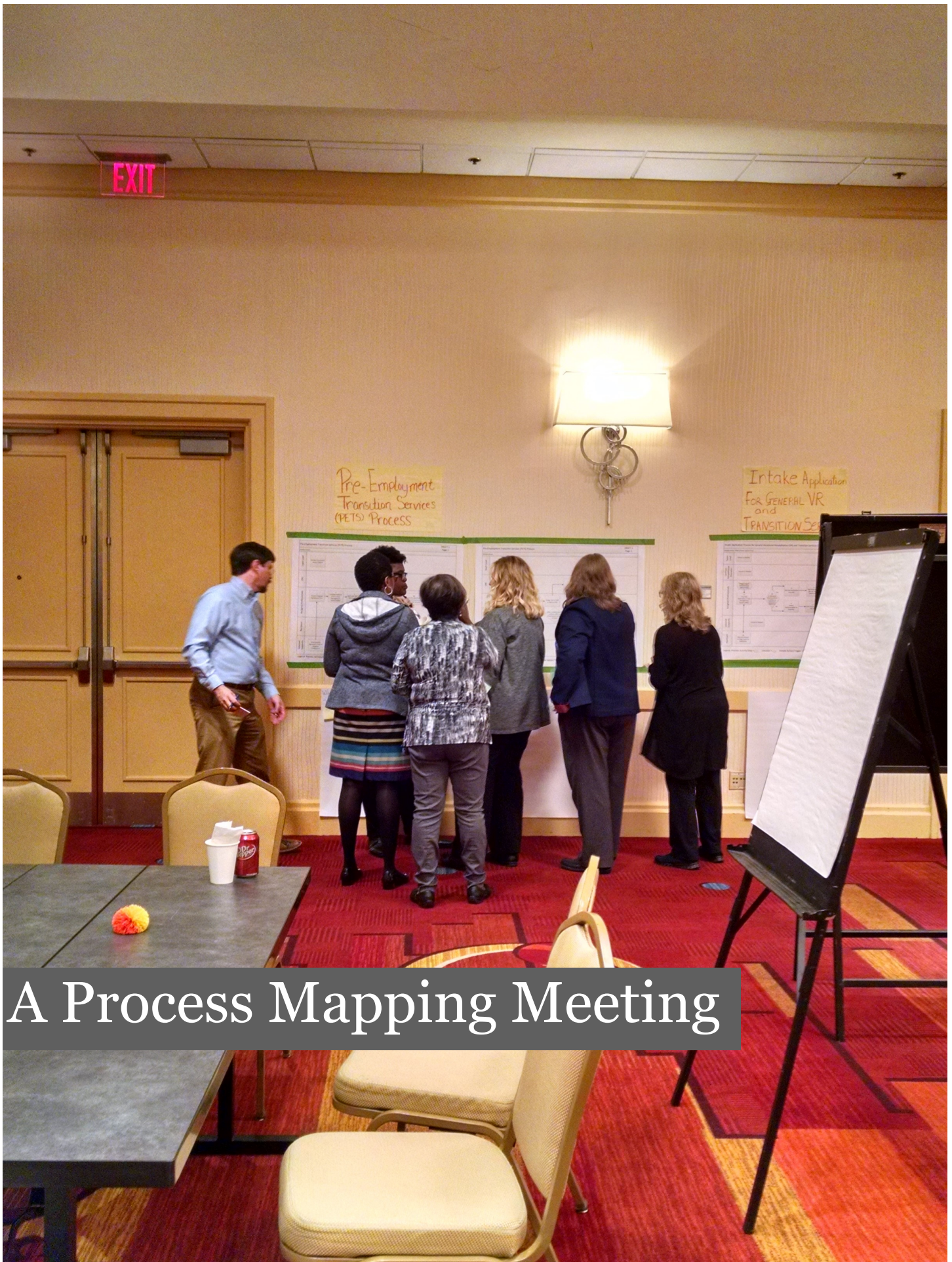
The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) has been busy in recent months. Here are a few of the things that have been happening in the program.

The BEP was awarded the Federal Law Enforcement Center (FLETC) in Brunswick contract for another five years under Vendor Manager Michael Benson.

The program is also excited to announce that the rest areas in Dooly County under managers Quinton Pickelsimer and the rest

area in Turner County under Blind Vendor Manager Don Tufts have re-opened as part of the Georgia Department of Transportation's recent highway rest area and welcome center restorations.

In addition, BEP Counselor Alfort "Al" Belin retired June 1, 2017. The program wishes to thank Al for his years of service with the state and wish him luck in all future endeavors.



A Process Mapping Meeting

Making a Plan and Sticking to It

Teams map out the processes that guide much of what we do.

In March and April of this year, field staff from the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program were selected to participate in the business mapping of the VR process. This was facilitated by consultant Diane Schlachter, owner of Organization Advancement Resources, Inc.

Approximately 70 staff dedicated eight days of their time to map the VR process from referral, to application, to eligibility, to needs assessment, to work plan development and delivery of services and employment and closure of a case.

A transition team worked on the process of providing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act-mandated pre-employment transition services to students who have a disability but do not have to be on a VR caseload. They specifically looked at how to enter them into the VR Process.

Employment Services refined their business process to maximize the success of clients as they move into employment. The staff of Roosevelt Warm Springs, Cave Spring, VR Statewide Coordinators and Assistive Work Technology mapped their business processes and identified and refined ways to further improve services.

In May, several individuals from these various mapping teams volunteered to participate and develop the forms, procedures and processes needed to complete and launch the new business mapping. Training for all VR staff will be provided over the next several months, with an anticipated implementation date of the entire newly redesigned processes set for October of this year. VR leadership greatly appreciates the hard work these teams put in over the last several months.

DAS Employee of the Month

This Disability Adjudication Services Nomination Comes From Pamela Nails

It is with great pleasure that I nominate Ms. Vicki Tanaka, a Disability Hearing Officer from Disability Hearing Unit 96 for the program's "Employee of the Month" award.

Ms. Vicki Tanaka has prior adjudicative experience from her time working in Florida. She began her career at Georgia DAS in September of 2012. Her diligent work ethic gained her a promotion to Disability Hearing Officer in April of 2014.

Ms. Tanaka consistently exceeds in her job duties as a Disability Hearing Officer. Her organizational skills are exceptional in that she completes her assigned work well before the deadline.

More extraordinarily, in addition to her normal case assignments, Ms. Tanaka frequently volunteers for extra hearing cases, which greatly assists with decreasing the overall backlog. These decisions are always completed expeditiously.

Furthermore, Ms. Tanaka manages her caseload with a high standard of accuracy and quality. She displays a pleasant demeanor, and she interacts well with the internal and external customers that we serve.

Ms. Tanaka is a valued employee and a true asset to Disability Hearing Unit 96.



GVRA is in the process of installing new signage at all our locations. Be on the lookout for the new signage complete with proper and updated branding.



GIB Wins Quality Work Environment Award

Georgia Industries for the Blind wins another one.

In May, Georgia Industries for the Blind (GIB) received the Bronze and Silver Level Awards from the National Industries for the Blind (NIB) and the National Association for Employment for People who are Blind (NAEPB). The recognition comes as a result of GIB's implementation of the first two levels of the Quality Work Environment (QWE) initiative at the Bainbridge plant.

The QWE initiative is a collaborative effort sponsored by NIB/NAEPB, SourceAmerica and the Ability One Commission. The QWE initiative was introduced plant-wide over a year ago with the formation of an employee-based focus group. The purpose of this group was to identify current best practices and note areas that needed improvement in the workplace.

The employee recommendations for improvement compiled during the self-assessment were sent to GIB management for implementation approval. An Employee Practice Implementation Committee (EPIC Team) was formed to oversee and monitor the implementation of each management-approved action item and report progress

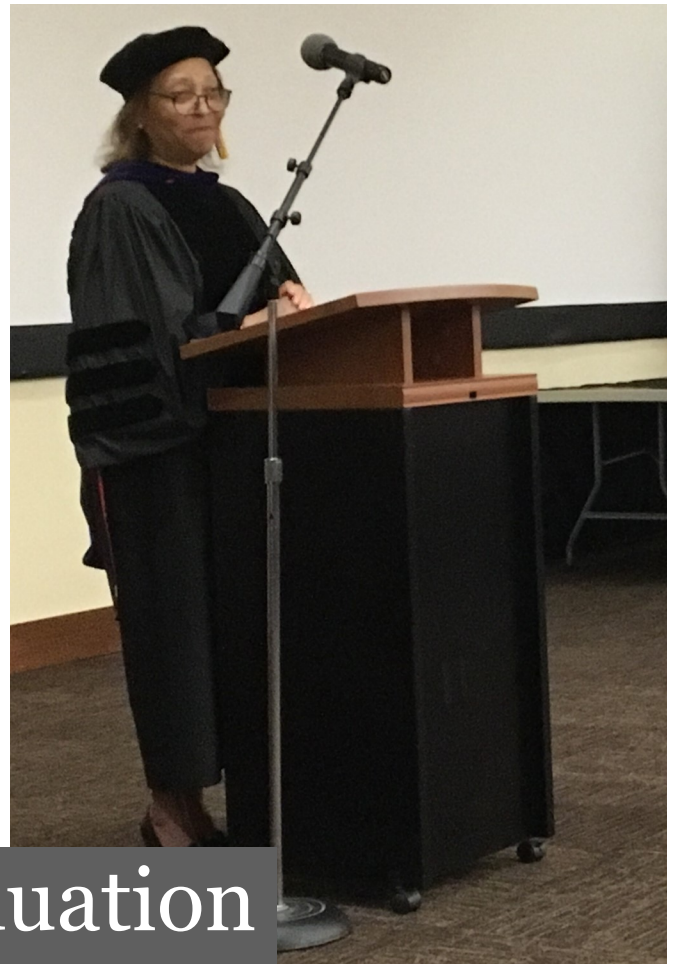
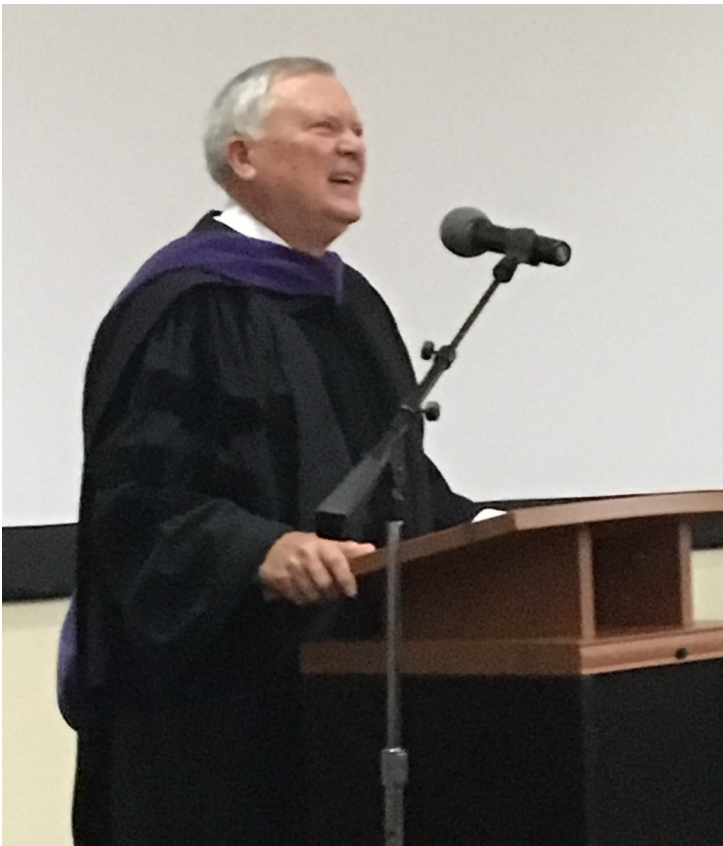
back to NIB. Once all action items were implemented, the QWE Assessment Process was repeated with an NIB representative to ensure continuous improvement.

Over 20 QWE action items have been put into place such as: new employee recognition methods, braille labeling on machines and specialize training to ensure upward mobility, among others.

Kendra Tribble, Shipping Clerk and Chair of the QWE EPIC committee said, "I'm really proud of the work that our team was able to accomplish for our plant. This created an opportunity for us to establish a better organizational culture and for our ideas to be heard. To have several of those ideas implemented successfully really gave us a boost of enthusiasm here."

The support of management along with the work done by the EPIC committee has allowed GIB to complete the first 2 levels of QWE in record time. The third level is currently in progress.





KSU Academy Graduation



The Kennesaw State Inclusion Program recently held a graduation ceremony, featuring Governor Nathan Deal (top left) as the keynote speaker. Dr. Valerie Whittlesey spoke as well as graduates and parents alike listened.

Teaming Up for Training

Employment Services and the Poses Family Foundation get to work.

The Employment Services team traveled to Macon in early May to discuss the agency's new efforts to reach out to employers.

James Emmet and Jonathan Stoops from the Poses Family Foundation were the keynote speakers, speaking respectively on the significance of forming key partnerships and job development strategies. Chief Client Management Officer Dale Arnold discussed the importance of teamwork while transitioning. He shared valuable information on agency strategy and the broader agency direction going forward. Shelly Kraft, provided additional training on the E3 project and WIOA policy and producers.

Director of Employment Services Ken Hise oversaw roundtable discussions about disability recognition, company travel and training. Members of the Assistive Work Technology (AWT) team talked about how small adjustments to everyday tasks can make a huge difference. AWT is the arm of the agency that aims to assist both employers and clients with technological accommodations.

The Employment Services team described the event as very informative, and they look forward to gaining more knowledge in the near future.



Front row: Stacey Murray, Scott Barr, John Stoops, James Emmett, Dale Arnold, Raj Pagadala and Inger Neal

Middle Row: Denise Young, Michele Mason, JoAnne Edwards, Crystal Bennett, Kira Smith, Lauri Tuten, Holly Sapp, Cassandra Coley, Kelly Gribble, Lela Guerra, Deb Thurman, Valeria Garner, Melissa Freeman, Tracy Stepney, Ben Cutrufelli, Quan Tat, Marc Houston, Walker Merritt

Back Row: Bill Bulloch, Winston Oluwole, Shelley Kraft, Ken Hise, Doreen Ventus, Tamie Randall, Kimbley Allen, Suzanne Sutton, Kareem Hill, Paul Workman, Lawrence Davis, Thomas Simpson and Troup Brinson

New Strategy Manager Named

Robin Blount assumes her new role immediately.

GVRA's Robin Blount has been named the agency's new Strategy Manager in the Office of Strategy and Innovation headed by Raj Gandy.

administrative law judge, Medicaid staff, and court reporter got to see up close and personal the real life of the child with a disability and their family.



She has held positions with the Georgia Advocacy Office as a staff attorney, Parent to Parent of Georgia as Director of Education Services, and the Babies Can't Wait Early Intervention Program as a Parent Educator.

She was also the Disability Content Expert for STG, International, a federal subcontractor, where she worked in Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama and Mississippi. In this role she provided technical assistance and training to Head Start agencies in serving young children with disabilities.

Robin has over 10 years of strategic planning experience as a director managing multiple grants and contracts and also from serving on various private and public boards and councils.

She has a bachelor's degree from Brandeis University where she majored in American Studies and graduated magna cum laude. As part of her undergraduate degree she spent her junior year at Keele University in Staffordshire, England.

In 2011, she was appointed by Governor Deal to serve on both the State Advisory Panel for the Georgia Department of Education as well as the State Rehabilitation Council. In 2016, she was again appointed by Governor Deal to serve on the Board of the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC).

She received her Juris Doctorate (JD) degree from the University of Georgia School of Law where she received the Order of the Barristers award. While in law school she participated in an international legal studies summer institute in Brussels, Belgium where she studied European Economic Community law.

She has worked in the disability field for over 28 years after being a private-practice trial lawyer handling federal and state civil and criminal cases. Robin has served individuals with both mental and physical disabilities from birth through adulthood in various agencies.

She was elected to the Board of Directors for TASH in 2013 and is the Chair of the 2017 TASH Conference being held in Atlanta in December.

One of her most cherished memories is holding Medicaid administrative hearings in the homes of children with complex disabilities and health needs because the

She is married to Daryl, and they have five children: Matthew, Kelley, Daniel, Jordan and Victoria.

State Employee Appreciation

May marked State Employee Appreciation Week across the state of Georgia, and offices all over celebrated by hosting parties, luncheons and giveaways for their employees.

Thanks to everyone who made it a great success.



“It’s a Dream Come True”

How one GVRA client found success in South Georgia.

Britton K. first came to GVRA in 2014, a year before he would graduate from Lowndes High School.

Britton’s vocational choice at the time was to obtain a certification in videography because he enjoyed playing videogames and liked the artistic aspect of them. To this end, he began attending Wiregrass Technical College but was taking remedial classes due to his different abilities as a person on the Autism Spectrum

Britton’s parents had previously learned about the training programs offered at Roosevelt Warm Springs (RWS) and thought that Britton would be better suited for this academic environment. Britton, along with his parents, met with his VR counselor, Jennifer Gillard, to discuss Britton’s progress at Wiregrass Technical College and to look at possible other options at RWS. To qualify for admission, Britton had to first complete discovery week to let him get better acquainted to the campus and to experience some time away from home.

Shortly after he completed discovery week in early 2016, he was admitted to the program. Britton worked with his counselor, Amanda Buckner of RWS, and attended behavioral group sessions to help him work on his social skills. Jennifer noted the change in Britton when she attended his progress meeting at Warm Springs in June of 2016. She noticed what a difference a couple of months had made in Britton. There was eye contact and also a newfound confidence in his demeanor and in his communication skills.

As the months progressed, Britton had an opportunity to become certified in several vocational areas, but decided Low Voltage Wiring would be his main vocational goal. Amanda and other team members at RWS were instrumental in Britton earning additional certifications: National Seminars

Training Customer Service Certification, Microsoft, Office Specialist PowerPoint Certification, Microsoft Office Specialist Word Certification, Legrand NUVO Player Portfolio Training Certification, LeGrand Intuity Certification and MARCRAFT Low Voltage Course Certification.



Britton returned home in December of 2016 fully prepared, fully charged, and ready to actively seek employment—with help from his Employment Consultant Thomas Simpson. With Britton’s resume in hand, Thomas contacted employers seeking electrician helpers. Ace Technologies was one of those employers who said yes. Britton interviewed for a position and was hired on April 17, 2017 for 25 hours a week at an hourly wage of \$8.50 an hour.

Britton’s next endeavor is to obtain his driver’s license so that, as he says, he is “not solely dependent upon his parents to take him to work.” Through Britton’s hard work and motivation, he had an opportunity to go through the door of possibility and realize his chosen vocational goal.

GVRA Human Resources Recognized

And they got to meet Governor Nathan Deal.

GVRA Human Resources was recently recognized by the Georgia Department of Administrative Services for outstanding service. It culminated in a ceremony on May 26 where staff members had the opportunity to meet and take a photo with Governor Nathan Deal.

The specific name of the awards were Department of Administrative Service's Commissioner's Recognition Award for Outstanding Performance in Compensation Management and the Commissioner's Recognition Award for Outstanding

Performance in Classification Management

Marya Calhoun, HR Director for GVRA, said it was honor and a testament to the hard work of the department as a whole.

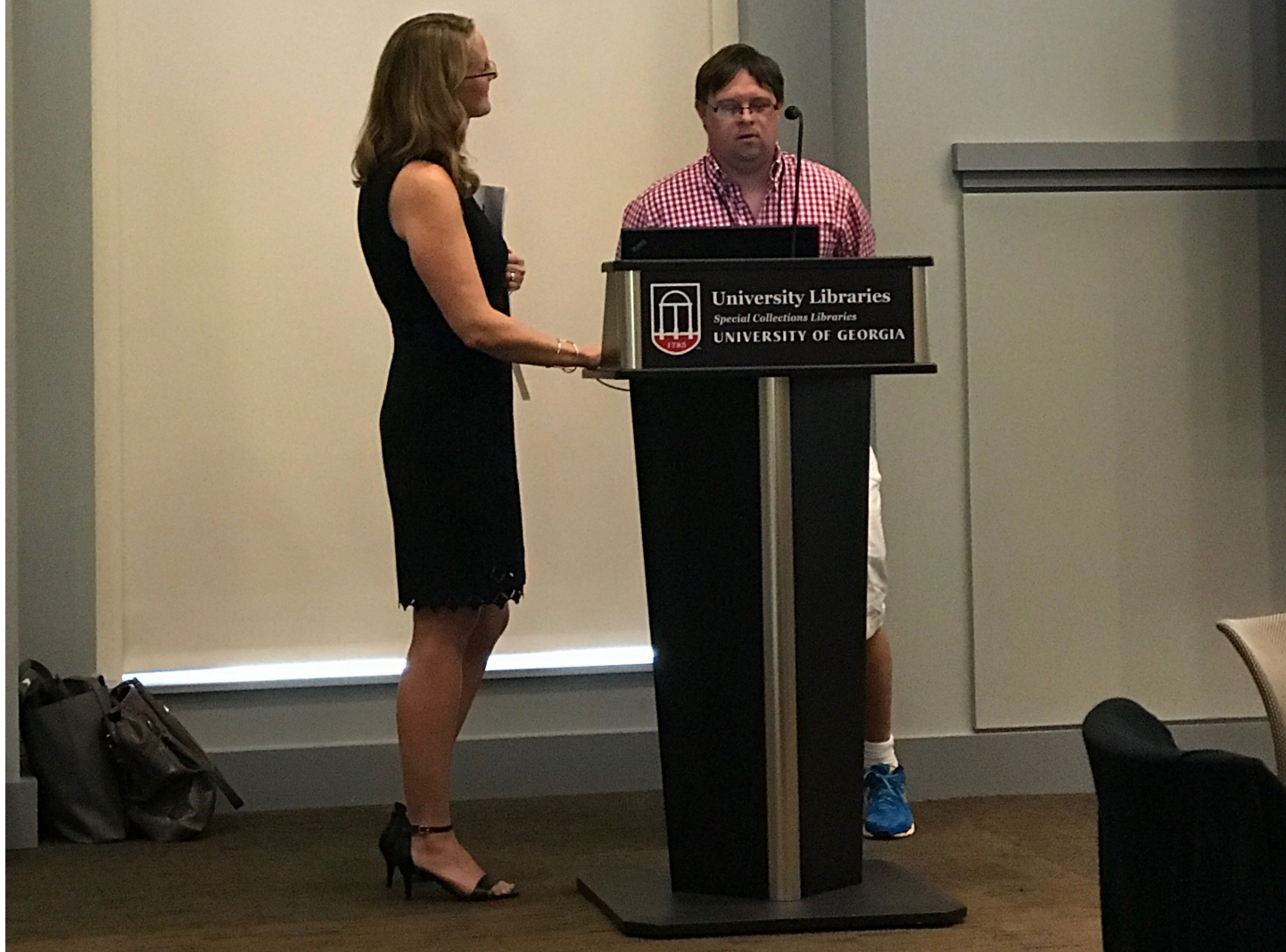
"I'm very proud of our staff for all that they've accomplished," said GVRA HR Director Marya Calhoun. "It's an incredible honor to be recognized by DOAS and Governor Deal, and we'll continue to do the work that not only serves our staff but helps them support our clients."



Pictured from left: Tia London, Taedra Morris, Lakeysha Coley, Sheryl Wilhite, Dawnn Johnson, Tania Scott, GVRA Executive Director Sean Casey, Governor Nathan Deal, Marya Calhoun Michelle Raines, Melanie Crew, Linda Williams, Falisha Stewart and Marva White.

Destination Dawgs

GVRA staff recently attended a ceremony honoring the first semester of the Destination Dawgs program at the University of Georgia. The program allows students with disabilities to attend regular-curriculum classes and to gain the kind of skills necessary for succeeding in the workforce.



Upcoming Events

June 19 9 a.m. to June 20 at 2 p.m.
Sodexo Job Fair at Georgia Tech
660 Williams St, Atlanta, GA 30313

June 21 at 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
GVRA-FAA Career Fair
1620 Phoenix Blvd, College Park, GA 30349

June 22 and 23
SRC Meeting
Hyatt Regency Savannah
2 W Bay St, Savannah, GA 31401

June 23 at 9 a.m.
Walgreens GVRA Hiring Blitz
150 Evelyn C. Neely Drive, Athens GA 30601

June 29
Roosevelt Warm Springs Graduation
6135 Roosevelt Hwy, Warm Springs, GA 31830

July 9-11
Georgia Association of Career and Technical Education (GACTE) Career Tech Expo
Renaissance Atlanta Waverly Hotel & Convention Center
2450 Galleria Pkwy, Atlanta, GA 30339

SRC Public Hearings

Written by Communications Specialist Tom Connelly

The Georgia State Rehabilitation Council held a series of public hearings across the state recently to allow members of the public to provide comment on proposed policy changes.

The meetings took place over several weeks in May, first in Dalton, then Atlanta, then Athens, then Macon, then Savannah, then Columbus, then Albany and finally wrapping up in Valdosta.

“We were really happy at the turnout at all the

locations,” said GVRA SRC Liaison Dana Skelton-Sanders. “We value the feedback from the community at large, and we will take it into consideration as we work to address these policy changes.

The SRC is a federally mandated council consisting of Georgians from all corners of the state appointed by the Governor to represent a wide range of persons with disabilities and stakeholders.

www.gvs.ga.gov

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